



## INSIDE INDIA

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### U.S. Congressional Delegation Visits USAID Health Projects in Agra and Chennai



U.S. Representatives (top row left to right) Howard Berman (D-CA), Jim Moran (D-VA), Jim Costa (D-CA), Ed Royce (R-CA), Dan Lungren (R-CA), and Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) pose with beneficiaries of USAID maternal and child health program. *Photo: USAID/ Sukhminder Dosanjh*

A visiting delegation of seven Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, their spouses, and staff members were in India last week, where they had the opportunity to visit two USAID health projects. The delegation was headed by Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA), who is Chairman of the influential House Committee on Foreign Affairs (HCFA), and included Representatives Gary Ackerman (D-NY), Jim Moran (D-VA), Jim Costa (D-CA), Ed Royce (R-CA), Dan Lungren (R-CA), and Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX). The delegation, several of whom serve on HCFA, had specifically asked to see USAID projects and they began their visit outside of Chennai with a trip to the Indian Community Welfare Organization (ICWO), a USAID supported group that is involved in HIV/AIDS prevention and care programs in the state of Tamil Nadu.

ICWO works with sex workers and other at-risk-populations as well as with People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHAs). Through USAID support, ICWO provides HIV/AIDS education and increases access to prevention and care services by linking people with government and health care providers, providing condoms, and increasing awareness of prevention and care services. ICWO also provides programs for the children of sex workers, and with support from other donors, provides anti-trafficking programs and nutritional support for children infected and affected by HIV.

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Rep. Costa, with a mother and child; beneficiaries of USAID's maternal and child health program in Agra.

Photo: USAID/ Sukhminder Dosanjh



HCFA Chair, Rep. Berman presents a *Healthy Mother Award* to a program beneficiary

Photo: USAID/ Sukhminder Dosanjh

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In a special program, the Members got an overview of the work USAID and ICWO are doing, heard from a peer educator and a community leader, and were treated to a unique cultural program.

Later in the week, the group headed to Agra, where they attended a Maternal and Child Health Fair. At the fair, Members were able to meet with mothers and children and learn about how USAID is working to combat the high rates of maternal and child mortality, malnutrition, and other diseases that affect mothers and their children.

In an interactive segment of the event, Members watched health workers administer immunizations and provide growth monitoring, health and nutrition education, and counseling.



Rep. Jackson Lee celebrates with a group of community women at the Health Fair in Agra. Photo: USAID/ Sukhminder Dosanjh

## Water Re-Use: A Creative and Cost Effective Solution to India's Growing Water Shortages

In many areas of India, both rural and urban, the growing shortage of water is reaching crisis proportions. The causes of the water shortage are varied; inadequate infrastructure, excessive ground water pumping, and rising demand by industrial and commercial enterprises. The consequences are potentially catastrophic; conflict, disease, and decreased food security, among others. In India, however, most of the municipal and industrial waste water produced is either un-treated or undertreated and disposed of in surface water bodies, where it often contaminates the local water supply. Because acute shortages of water persist in virtually all cities and rural townships at the same time the volume of waste water is increasing, reuse represents one of the largest potential sources of "new water" in India. Simply defined, water reuse is the "capture and use of water discharged or lost by a previous user."

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To address the water supply crisis in India, USAID has supported the development of a large scale water reuse project in collaboration with the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) in the state of Maharashtra. USAID's team developed a water reuse project jointly with NMC in recognition of the fact that water reuse is a critical component in NMC's long-term water resources master plan. Next, the team developed detailed pre-feasibility studies and engaged various end-users and stakeholders to begin project development. NMC reached an agreement with the state-owned power generation company, MahaGenco, to use treated waste water as a source for the substantial water needs of its power plants.

Accordingly, NMC entered into a project agreement with MahaGenco to supply up to 110 million liters of water per day to a new coal-fired power station. NMC will build a new sewage treatment plant capable of producing and conveying high quality water to MahaGenco. This will result in the increased availability of fresh water from regional water reservoirs to serve the NMC's growing needs. Close to one million people will directly benefit from this water reuse project.

Expressing its confidence in the importance of the project, the Government of India, through its large scale city modernization scheme, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, provided NMC and MahaGenco with a 70% co-financing grant for the \$28 million project.

### **USAID Supports Awards for Excellence in HIV/AIDS Reporting**

Recognizing the important role that media can play in providing in-depth, sensitive, and accurate reporting of HIV/AIDS, USAID, in association with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Communication Programs (JHU CCP) India, has been working with the Indian Express Group to provide *Awards for Excellence in HIV/AIDS Reporting* since 2006. On April 13, the Chief Justice of India, Honorable Shri. K. G. Balakrishna, presented this year's awards to Savita Vikram Harkar of Lokmat News in Nagpur, Maharashtra for articles on various HIV/AIDS issues, including discrimination against people living with or affected with HIV in hospitals, in the Marathi Language and to Dnyanesh V. Jathar of *The WEEK* in Mumbai for his English language article, "God's Forgotten Children," which focused on the plight of children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

### **USAID Study Highlights Poor Health Conditions in UP Slums**

A USAID funded study, conducted by Urban Health Resource Centre, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj Medical University, Lucknow recently documented the poor state of maternal, neonatal, and child health in the slums of Meerut city, Uttar Pradesh (UP), highlighting the need for strategies to improve individual health seeking behavior and access to effective child survival interventions.

The study, which was released at a New Delhi workshop last week, provides information on the high infant and child mortality rates, poor maternal and child health, and considerable percentage of children suffering from malnutrition in the Meerut slums. The study also looked at the utilization and quality of health and family planning services and highlighted harmful social practices and knowledge gaps among the slum community.

Meerut, one of the highest tax paying areas of India, is home to the third largest slum population and one of the largest urban Muslim populations in India (close to 32%). USAID/India's urban health program is designed to bring about sustainable improvements in the health conditions of the urban poor by influencing policies and programs and empowering the community. In Meerut city, USAID is working to develop and test sustainable, cost-effective, and replicable health delivery approaches, like improved immunization, promotion of exclusive breast feeding, and access to professionally trained birth attendants, among other interventions, to help change the grim health picture highlighted in the study.